

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 401 754

FL 024 251

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TITLE Contrastive Rhetoric: Cross-Cultural Aspects of Second-Language Writing.
REPORT NO ISBN-0-521-44688-0
PUB DATE 96
NOTE 216p.
AVAILABLE FROM Cambridge University Press, 40 West 20th Street, New York, NY 10011-4211 (paperback: ISBN-0-521-44688-0, \$17.95; hardback: ISBN-0-521-44145-5, \$44.95).
PUB TYPE Books (010) -- Information Analyses (070) -- Guides - Classroom Use - Teaching Guides (For Teacher) (052)
EDRS PRICE Document Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS *Contrastive Linguistics; Cultural Context; *Discourse Analysis; Interdisciplinary Approach; Language Research; Linguistic Theory; Literary Genres; Research Methodology; Rhetoric; *Second Languages; Translation; *Writing (Composition); Writing Instruction

ABSTRACT

The book is an introduction to the field of contrastive rhetoric, an area of research in second language learning that identifies learners' problems in composition and attempts to explain them by referring to the rhetorical strategies of the first language. It traces the history of contrastive approaches to the study of second language writing and explores interrelationships with other disciplines, including composition studies, translation, text linguistics (discourse analysis), genre analysis, and cultural anthropology. Examples from a wide variety of languages are used to illustrate how second language writers draw on a range of cross-linguistic and cross-cultural influences at the sentence, paragraph, and text level. The effects of these influences on different aspects of textual organization (cohesion, coherence, schematic structure) are examined, and the ways in which linguistically and culturally bound assumptions about the nature and purpose of written texts can transfer from one language to another are explored. Research methods, quantitative and qualitative, and assumptions underlying research in contrastive rhetoric are reviewed and assessed, and practical applications of such research in applied linguistics and second language writing instruction are demonstrated. (Author/MSE)

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